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GNEW EVER COUNTY OF CORNER

LETTER

From the

Reve Mr. Croswell A

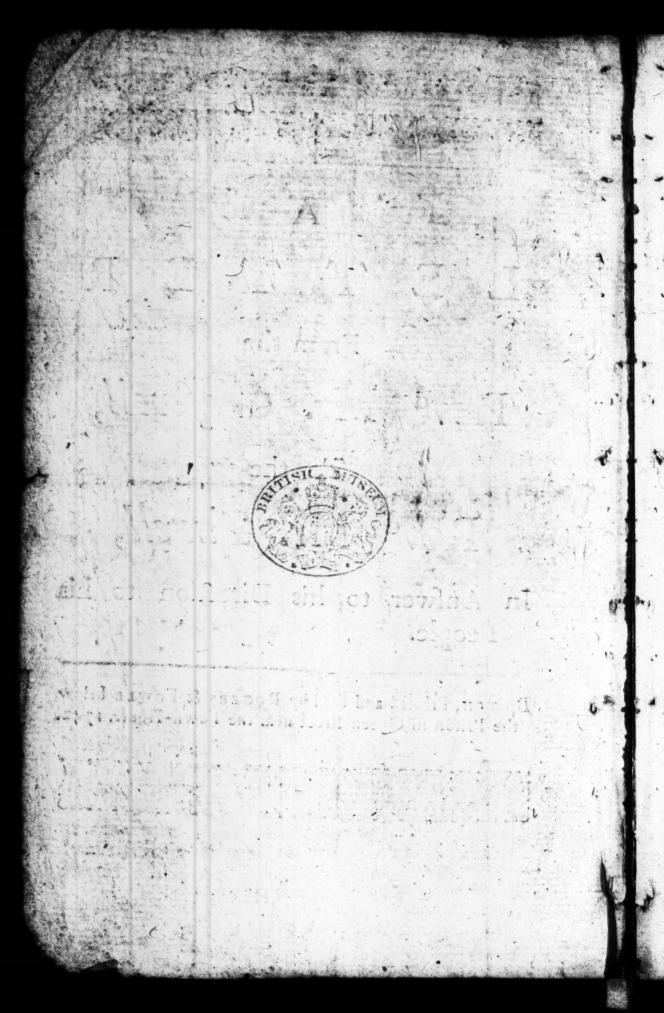
To the

Revd Mr. Turell

In Answer to his Direction to he People.

BOSTON, Printed and Sold by Rogers & Fowns





REMARKS ON MR. TURELL ADJRECTIONS CHECKER STORES ON MR. TURELL ADJRECTIONS CHECKER STORES ON MR. TURELL ADJRECTIONS CHECKER STORES ON THE STORES OF THE S

Connecticut, Groton, June 29. 1742.

Rev^d Sir,

OUR late Pamphlet, entitled, A Direction to your People with Relation to the present Times, hath been just Matter of Offence and Astonishment to many, and my self among the rest. And since no one hath made any Reply to it, I think it for the Glory of God, and the Interest of Religion at this Day, not to let it pass unanswered.

There are several Passages in it, which have a particular Reserence to me, without any Controversy: But inasmuch as they never yet gave me the least personal Resentment, so I trust I shall conduct my self towards you in this Letter just as I should do, were I sure you never once tho't of me throughout your whole Personance.

There are two or three Things in your Preface, which

ought to be taken Notice of as we go along.

The first is your afferting upon the Credit of one you call a worthy Minister in this Colony, that this is a Principle vented among us, viz. That unregenerate Men ought: not to read the Bible. The Minister is unknown. However we may venture to fay, furely an Enemy hath done this. Nay, if you will bring him into the Light, (and I think you ought to, or else father the Story your self) and he doth not appear to be one of our Grand Opposers, if not one of the Twenty one Memorialists, I will publickly alk your Pardon. I don't think there is one Person among us, that will own the Charge, or upon whom it can be prov'd: Nor could you possibly think the Error common, notwithstanding what that bidden Minister wrote. Your telling this Story therefore in Gath, and caufing the Philistings to triumph over God's Israel, by representing it as a Principla

Your Definition of an Oppofer also in the next Sentence, is worthy to be remark'd upon : An Opposer with you (if I understand you right) is one who attributes the whole of this glarious Scene, to the Devil or wild Enthufiafm. Sir, may not a Man be an Enemy to, or an Opposer of another, and yet be constrained to own that there is some good Thing found in him? And by a Parity of Reason. may not a Man be an Enemy to or an Opposer of the glorious Work of Grace among us, and yet be forced to allow that he fees some Divine Rootsteps in it? Surely he may. The most outragious Opposers I have conversed with grant there is a good Work of Conversion going on : but then they fay that the one half, or by far the greatest Part of the present Religious Stir proceeds from the Devil. Why then do you give us such an unbounded Definition of Opposers? Was you afraid that if you had taken others into the Number, you yourself could not have been lest out? To begin to be a little plain with you, Sir, there can't to me, be a plainer Argument of a Man's being an Oppofer himself, than his allowing none to be Opposers, but those that deny the whole Work.

Nor can I help flanding amaz'd at your Charity for those that deny the whole Work, and attribute it to the Devil and Enthufiafm, Subjoin'd in these Words, I am far from judging their State. Mr. Edwards of Northampton, who deals as gently with those that are out of the Way, as most Men, doth not stick at judging the present State of Oppofers, (and I am perswaded he calls those Opposers who don't come up to your Definition) by declaring in his late Treatise, That they are all in Danger of the unpardonable Sin, which is a Danger peculiar to the unconverted. Whoever confiders Matth. 12. and 24. seriously, must think that those who impute the Glorious Operations of the Holy Ghost in these last Days, to the Devil, &c. have either already committed that dreadful Sin, Ver. 32, which can't be forgiven, neither in this World, nor the World to come, or at least, are in amazing Danger of it.

And yet you have stretch'd your Charity so far, that it can reach such who have made themselves thus wile. Take Care Sir, that you don't stretch it any surther A-for one stretch more may make it reach the Devil himself.

I dismiss the Preface and come to the Direction itself. which you lately entertain'd your Heavers with, and which you now entertain the Publick with from the Press. And here Sir, let me lament that you are so uneasy with your People, for their being so bungry ofter the Word, and desiring to dwell almost continually in the House of Gods You indeed praise them for this : but then confidering what you have faid here, and in your 10th Page, you fault them much more. It puts me in Mind of aMinister's Conduct in Connecticut, who is fince an eminent Oppofer, --- When he first began to discover himself, he faulted his Hearers for overdoing in Religion: He would have them eat more and fleep more and work more and do themselves no Harm. In a Word, he would have had them labour less than they did for the Meat which endureth to everlasting Life, and more for that which perifteth; which, is not very confistent with our-Saviour's Advice, John 6. 27. Notwithstanding, Sir, what you have cited from Dr Gilpin and Mr. Henry, I firmly believe, that were they in your Circumstances, they would not have deaden'd their People's Zeal and Devotion by any fuch Hints as yours; but their Hearts would have leap'd for Foy, notwithstanding any Labours they might be expos'd to thereby, and they would always have been glad when they heard the Voice of the Multitude (tho' never to often) faying to them, Come let us go up to the House of the Lord.

Your Bitterness and Uncharitableness towards ALL Exhorters is what comes next in Course. And yet it can't be denied by those that believe any Thing of the present Work, but that they have been very instrumental in carrying it on. Some of them 'tis to be feared are not converted; and therefore should be born Testimony against. And others stand in need of being overseen and directed by faithful Ministers; but yet these latter ought to be lov'd and respected because God hath been with them.

The

The particular Exherter you warn your People against, is as I am credibly inform'd, a very pious and zealous Christian. And if so, he is precious in the Sight of God, tho' he may be vile and contemned in your Eyes. As to his making light of the Sabbath and the two Sacraments as you charge him, Page 9, 'tis questionable whether you have any other Foundation, than only, his not making a Christ of them, or Conversion; as both Ministers and People us'd to do too much in the late Times of Ignorance, and as some

who hate to be reformed, do still,

Nor must I omit your being stumbled at Persons telling their Experiences, and giving the Reason of the Hope that is in them before great Numbers of People. This you fay the Exhorters are guilty of : but they learn'd it from certain zealous Preachers who had then lately visited the Neighbourhood; and this Practice you call by the invidious Name of Men's proclaiming their own Goodness. Ministers refert'd to, are undoubtedly, Mr. Buel and my felf. Whether He declared what God had done for his Soul, in Imitation of David, I am not able to determine; God not suffering me to hear him : but I suppose the Love of Christ constrained him thereto. For my own part, God gave me while at Charlestown, several Times, such a Sense of my own Vileness, and his Mercy to me notwithstanding; and brought the Day of my Espousals so fresh to my Mind, that I believe I should have resisted the Holy Ghost, had I not uttered the Memory of his Goodness in the Midst of the great Congregation. Nor is there any Thing more likely to affect and edify an Auditory, than for a Minister in a feeling Manner, to fet forth himself, as an Ensample to others, and to affure them by his own Experience, that there is Mercy enough and to spare, and that the chief of .. Sinners, may come and welcome to JESUS CHRIST. And as I have feveral Times told publickly the Manner of the ever-bleffed Spirit's Influences upon my Soul both in Conviction and Conversion; so I am persuaded at certain Times I should think it for the Glory of God to do it again: even tho' I knew Mr. Turell and an hundred other Men of equal Delicacy in Religion, stood by mocking all the while; or at least despising me in their Hearts. for commending myself, and proclaiming my own Goodness. It feems to me almost a Thing incredible, that any Minifters who have had a thorough Work of the Law and Gofpel on their Souls, can be dumb and not open their Mouths about them, especially at such a Time as this, and when they are preaching upon them. Nay, I am not without Fears, that ordinarily the Reason why Ministers don't tell their Experiences to their Hearers, is because they have no Experiences they dare trust them with. What follows in this oth Page, is of a Piece with what I just remark'd upon: for those that don't love to hear much about Experiences, always, and naturally take it ill that any Ministers should be look'd upon as Pharifees, who keep close to the Bible, and (as you express it) live in some Measure up to the Rule of Life, the Laws of Christ. But why should it be reckon'd a Paradox that some Ministers who are found in the Faith, and make a fair shew in the Flesh, should yet appear to be carnal and unconverred? It feems very natural to suppose that such Ministers, who were never taught of God, but only have learn'd Things by Rote, should when they discourse upon the Work of Humiliation, and the Soul's receiving Christ, discover themselves to experienc'd and observing Christians, to be meer Ignoramus's in Religion. But I must not insist long upon this; though I should be glad, had I an Opportunity to discourse with you, and answer all your Objections to the contrary.

What follows in your Pamphlet Sir, 'till we come to the 13 Particulars, I must needs tell you (and I am sure it hurts me to tell you of it) seems to be one continued Piece of Enmity and Prejudice against travelling Ministers. You can scarce forbear crying out to your People, Ob solish Galatians, who hath bewitched you? And you tell them your solemn Ordination Vow obliges you to bear faithful Testimony against some Things that are amiss among them. What dreadful Things are these? Why, their loving to hear those Ministers preach whom God hath own'd; and since you will not let them preach in your Pulpit; running after them to the Neighbouring Towns;

and hearing them preach Sermon after Sermon. The Mimifters again referr d to, are Mr. Buel and my felf. And pray Sir what meaneth the Heat of all this Anger ? We Both preach pure Goffel God hath been with us of a Truth. The Arm of the Lord bath been revealed ; and by the Mihistrations of fuch Wetros, many, many have believed and turned to the Lord (May we always look upon our felves only as Instruments, and not boulf our felves against the Hand that uses us:) These Sir, are Things that cannot be fosken against : To disbelieve that God hath bleffed even us. is to difbelieve the Work itself. And if To, can't you love us through all our Failings; and regard us a little for the Work's Sake? Or, do you think that however God hath wrought by us, yet because you judge us imprudent, this can be a sufficient Reason to use us with more Sparpnets than I believe you were ever known to use against the most bitter Oppofers themselves? How unkind, how much like an Enemy is it, to twit us with being Mr. Whitefield's and Mr. Tennent's Apes? If God bath given us something of that Love to Christ and Pity to immortal Souls, which are fo confoicuous in them, fo that there is fome little and remote Resemblance between us and them, must we be pictur'd out to the World, as aping those Gentlemen?

As to our faying, (or any of our dear Brethren.) that where a Minister and his People are at Peace, Satan is at the Head of it, as you charge fome of us; I believe never one of us uttered the Words: However I will now fay, that there feems too much Truth in the Remark. Many Minifters and People who were very peaceable, while they dwelt at Eafe in Zion, and were little or nothing acquainted with the Power of Godliness, are at Varience when the Lord comes powerfully among them, and, there are many who are not only almost, but altogether Christians. Such Perfons as these I have last mentioned, ordinarily are disgusted with their Ministers, for their Deadness, for their open, or more fecret Opposition to God's Work, and for their Unwillingness to let any Ministers preach in their Pulpits, whom God hath made instrumental in carrying it on:

I come now to speak to the THIRTEEN PARTICUnans, that you have against the Work of God, or if you chuse the Expression, against the Subjects and Instruments of it.

You blame them for a cenforious Spirit: " and judging the Hearts of Men .--- Yea judging some un-" feen, and undiscoutsed with." . To this I answer, These you fault, don't pretend to look upon the Heart ; that is the Lord's Province, I Sam. 16. 7. but only look at the outward Appearance, i. e. the Actions or Discourse of Persons, especially about their Experiences in Religion; and thereby they can't help forming fome Judgment whether Men's Hearts are right with God or not. You your felf Sir, as charitable as you are, can't difcourfe with a Person half an Hour, or a less Space about Religion, withour passing something of a Judgment in your own Mind, whether the Man be a Christian or no; or in other Words. whether his Heart be right, or not : And their are not you guilty of judging Men's Hearts alfo? The Truth is, this judging which you find in your felf, and which you condemn in others, is as natural, and unavoidable as 'tis to breathe, and therefore not criminal : And we are only

on guilty of finning against that divine Prohibition. Mae. 7. 1. Judge not, when we are rafe, or molicious in the Judgment we pass upon others.

And as to judging Perfons unfeen or undiffeours & with : where is the Harm of this? Have not you (as well as others.) look'd upon many Persons to be wicked and graceless, whom you never faw, nor heard speak, because they had fuch a Character given them by those that are acquainted with them whom you can depend upon ?

2. You complain "that thefe Persons represent Affu-" rance to be of the Effence of faving Faith." -- For my Part I believe also, that there is no true Believer, but hath had Affurance for fome Space of Time longer or shorter; fo that he could once say, be knew in whom be bad believed;

and that he had passed from Death to Life.

As to your 3d. Complaint, about "none approaching to the Lord's Table, but fuch as have full Affurance"; I answer; that this hath been an old Debate whether Persons should come to the Lord's Table without Assurance; and forme good Christians have all along been for it, and others against it, as they are now, Mor should I be griev'd if Communion Tables were termer unless the Spirit of God were pour'd out more abundantly; for 'tis melancholy to think how apt People are to look upon. coming to the Sacrament to be coming to Christ; infomuch that this very Ordinance is the Ministration of Death to them. I am forry Sir, that you hint as if it wou'd be needless for a Number of affured Christians to meet together to commemorate the dying Love of Jesus Christ. Every Thing is needful for them which tends to inflame their Love to the Redeemer, and to give them more lively Foretaftes of the Joys which shall be revaled: The Ordinance of the Lord's Supper must therefore be very needful and be-The neficial to them.

4th Thing objected, "That there is a Witness of the " Sport given that we are the Children of God without "the concurring Testimony of our own; or it is so diffinct that it may eafily be diffinguish'd from it, and " that we need not examine it by the Word" ; I must

deny as a downright Slander upon Gad's dear Children, invented by the Father of Lies, and his Emillaries, and which therefore you ought to bluth for having publickly mention'd. Your

they do in many Places, on Dreams, Trances, Villons, Revelations, Impulses, &c." is not altogether without some Grounds, but yet you stretch it to the utmost, and make it as black as ever you can: So that when you speak Truth you do it with the Air of an infulting Enemy.

As for your 6th Objection, "That Ministers should preach without Study, &c., as you say some hold." I answer, some are of this Mind: but I never knew any Ministers put it in Practice but Mr. Whitesteld and Mr. Davenport. Their Minds are so perpetually in Heaven; and their Hearts are so filled with the Love of Christ, which makes their Tongues like the Pen of a ready Writer, that they would be rather burn than help'd by those Preparations which seem to be in some Measure needful to Ministers of a lower Form. The more any of us improve in the divine Life, and the closer we walk with God, the less Paper, or previous Meditation shall we want in order to preach the Everlasting Gospel of Jesus Christ.

"verted Ministers to be wholly useles, &c." To this I reply, This Judgment is according to Truth -- If they are secure and unawaken'd, they speak of divine and eternal Things, in such a cold unbelieving Manner, that they only harden the Hearts of their Hearers, and distuse a Spirit of Atheism over the whole Congregation. Or, if they are pricked to the Heart, and under deep Convictions, they will be infinitely hazardous to the Souls they deal with: All, their Applications will have a Tendency to marry them to the Law, and to keep them from being espayed to the King of Glory. The Truth is, such Ministers, for want of Experience, have no true Idea of the Way to Heaven, but think that Way leads to it, which leads right down to

[12] the Gates of Hell. I speak what I know, Sir, I'my felf in the Times of my Ignorance, and before God was ple to reveal his Son in me, notwithstanding all I had rend and beard and preach'd about closing with Christ, (which is the Way to Heaven) had no more an Idea of the Thing. than the Beaft I ride upon. Your

8th Objection, -- " About Women's praying and ex-"horting in Affemblies, as in fome Places," is fully answered by Mr. Edwards of Northampton, in his late

noted Treatife; to which I refer you.

othly, You object, " Rath and unguarded Expressions uttered by the new Converts, or their Teachers; particularly their faying, The more good Works Men do, the es more they shall be damued: which (you say) tends to drive all Virtue out of the World." Now this Expression is easily adjusted by the Calvinistical Scheme in which you were educated. For that teaches, that Works befare Grace or Conversion, are Sin, and deserve Damnation: The longer any Man lives therefore and doth Juch Works the greater will be his Damnation: tho' fell his Punishment will be greater, if instead of these had only done materially bad Works. If any Persons have us'd some such Expressions, you, and all understanding Persons, know how to explain their Meaning, which you know to be found : and therefore need not make fuch an Outcry. against them.

tothly, "A great want of Order, Decency, &c. in the publick Worship" is complain'd of. In Pimes past there hath been Order in the Churches of Christ, instead of Religion; and Ministers and People were too well contented with it : And even at this Glorious Day, many are for having no more Religion than is confiftent, with their Dogon of Order, Beauty and Decency in the House of God. But when God comes with his great Power into his Sanctuaries, this Dayan will not be able to fland before him, but must fall, and be broken to Pieces. The Truth is, God never works powerfully, but Men cry out of Diforder : for God's Order differs vastly from their nice and delicate Apprehenfrons of it.

heen laid on fudden Light and Comfort filling the Souls of Sinners" --- Answer, There are some Instances of Perfons, who were not really converted, at the Time when they had a fort of Light and fudden Comfort. But how far you intended to be understood, in this Objection against sudden Light and Comfort, God only knows. You intimate in the close of this Charge, that Persons are told by their Instructors, "That 'tis Unbelief to sear ofter such Come" fort; and that they must not examine their Comforts by the Word." This, Sir, is a most hideous Slander cast upon God's Children: You can't prove it upon one single Person: And to be free with you, Sir, you must bring your. Author, or else let the Story lie at your own Doot.

Your 12th and 13th Articles or Objections both relate to Singing: As to the former; whether there is any Harm in finging devout Hymns before publick Worthip, to elevate the Soul to God, especially if they are first read over to the People that they may the better understand them. as I think hath been the Practice : Let all ferious and lively Christians judge. And as to the latter, viz. " Persons finging Hymns and the Pfalms of David in Ferry-Boots and sometimes in the Streets, late at Night, as you com-" plain;" I can't be of your Mind that this is Pharifaism; if it was it would not make Pharifees to angry; fome of whom as I am inform'd are more zealous against this godly Practice, than they are against finging leud and prophant Songs, or even against curfing and fwears; ing, which they so often hear in Ferry-Boats, and as they walk the Streets, 'Tis to be own'd, that there are some few good Men, who, though they are delighted with this Melody, yet think it prudent to forbear the Practice: but those that are really the most imbitter'd and implacably fet against it are Pharifees (there being something in their Souls which makes it a Torment to them to hear others rejoice in Christ Jesus) wherefore because it is so displeasing to them, this is an Argument with me, that it is a Sacrifice with which God is well pleased. Belides it hath a direct Tendency to fir up the Gift that is in Christians.

Redeemer, causes their Hearts to burn within them; and blows up the Spark of Love into a Flame. Again, singing Praises, we have Reason to think will be the everlasting Employment of the heavenly State; Is it not proper then that the high Praises of God and of the Lamb should be much in our Mouths? And is it not a finful Shame to be afraid to let others observe us join with the Angels and Archangels, in that heavenly Work which is to be our Employment & Enjoyment thro'out the endless Ages of Eternity?

And as to those Persons that are disgusted at it. I believe finging in their bearing, will be the likeliest Way to do them Good: Many such having already dated their faving Convictions, from hearing the Children of Zion rejoice in their King. Surely, thought they in themselves, we are no Christians, fince we don't love to praise Christ our felves, and feel fuch an Enmity when we hear others: praife him; and thereupon they were pricked to the Heart, and had no Rest till they had rested upon the Rock Christ Felus. The ftrongest Argument that can be brought against this Exercise is Custom: and this in Process of Time I hope will die away, or rather be an Argument for it. However, we are not altogether without Custom in Favour. For (as Bishop Burnet assures us in his Abridgment of his History of the Reformation, Pag. 331.) in the Year 1558, when there was a glorious Reformation going on in France, as there is in New-England now, the Hearts of God's Children were fo rais'd that great Numbers of them met together in the Night in the publick Walks about Paris, finging the Pfalms of David in Verfe. This gave great Offence to the Oppofers of that Day, who were all Papills: They could not endure to hear People finging in the Streets, and in the Night too. No Doubt their Mouths were filled with Arguments taken from Order, and Decency and Disturbance of Families: In a Word, Their Enmity was so great, that an Edict or Law was made against those that should so offend. But the King and Queen of Navarre joining in the same Practice, the Law was not put in Execution: The Dignity of those crawned

Thus, Sir, I have confidered the THIRTEEN PARTY-CULARS, which you have objected against the Subjects and Instruments of God's Work at this Day. As well as your more general Objections that went before. now to draw toward a Conclusion: I can't help thinking what you faid was the main Reason of publishing this Pamphlet, in the Preface to it; viz. "That your Cha-" racter might be vindicated, which was injur'd (you "think) by a Report, spread abroad; That of a zealous "PROMOTER of the glorious Work of God's Grace, and " Spirit appearing, you are become an OPPOSER." Would to God you had wiped away this Reproach ! then the Generation of God's Children would have rejoic'd with an exceeding great foy; then my Heart would have been glad even mine. But instead of this, your pleading your own Caufe, hath day strengthen'd the common Suspicion : and caus'd many to fay, that the one balf of your Opposition was not told them before. The natural Tendency of your Direction however specious any of the Pretences are. is to make the Hearts of the Righteous sad, and to strengben the Hands of the Wicked, both of which are an Abomination to the Lord. Nay to be plain wirh you, I believe there is not one implacable Enemy-to Jesus Christ and his Caufe, that hath read your Performance, but loves & honours you for it.

If you think it hard to be look'd upon and represented as an Opposer; I will set before you the main Features of an Opposer so that you may see as it were in one View how great a Resemblance there is between you and them.

The Opposers tell Stories which bear hard upon the profent Work, the Subjects and Instruments of it, that have no Foundation at all: So doth Mr. Turell.

The Opposers make great Stories of little ones, and they represent Things in the worst Colours. So doth Mr. Turell.

The Opposers are Men of unbounded Charity as the Word is commonly & fallly understood: So is Mr. Farell.

The Opposers, especially if they are Ministers, are much disgusted at their People's being so thirsty after preaching; and think they ought to spend much Time between Sermons. In a Word; That a little Preaching is better than a great deal: This also is right Mr. Turell.

The Opposers are wonderfully uneasy if Persons tell their Experiences and speak of the Love of Christ in their Souls before, great Numbers: Especially if Ministers do so in

the Pulpit .--- So is Mr. Turell.

The Opposers can't bear the Thought of travelling Ministers coming into their Pulpits, however God blesseth their Labours; and frequently warn their People against them. This also is right Mr. Turell.

In brief: Put all those Things together (and others might be mention'd,) and I don't see but Mr. Turell is as much like an Opposer, to use your own phrase; as one Egg

is like another.

Nor doth it all avail with me, that you sometimes speak of the blessed Work, and glorious Work. These and such like Expressions only qualify you to do the more extensive Harm. If I heard that you threw by all your Friendship, and ascrib'd the whole of the present Scene to the Devil and Enthusiasm, I should think you had lost your Sting, and could not do such Disservice to Religion as now you do. For, (I speak the Truth, my Conscience bearing me Witness) I look upon your little Pamphlet to be more infectious and poisonous than the French Prophets, the Tryal of Mr. Whitefield's Spirit, or any other Pamphlet of this Kind, we have been infested with.

That God may grant Repentance to you for writing it, and to others for spreading it abroad, especially to Ministers who have given them about in their own Parishes,

is the hearty Prayer, of your

Well-wisher and humble Servant,

Andrew Croswell.

